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A

SERMON

Preached at the

Anniversary Meeting

OF THE

Eaton-Scholars

At St. *Mary le Bow*, on *Nov.* 22d. 1683.

By *Joseph Layton*, late Fellow of *King's-Colledge* in *Cambridge*, now Vicar of *Ringwood* in *Hampshire*.

Published at the request of the Stewards.

Dii majorum umbris tenuem, & sine pondere terram,
Spirantesque crocos, & in urna perpetuum ver,
Qui præceptorem sancti voluere parentis
Esse loco——— Juvenal. Sat. 7.

LONDON,
Printed for *Sam. Carr*, at the *King's-Head* in St. *Paul's* Church-Yard, 1684.

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TO THE

Honourable and Worthy Gentlemen,

STEWARDS

OF THE

Eaton-Scholars FEAST, 1683.

Sir *J. Conway*, Bar. } Mr. *William East*,
Sir *Ja. Clarke*, Kt. } Mr. *Samuel Layton*,
Mr. *Ch. Turner*, } Mr. *Charles Webb*.

Gentlemen,

I *Have made bold to prefix your Names to the ensuing Discourse, but I have not any of the ordinary Reasons for Dedications to alledge for my self. I pretend not to* Cancel old Obligations, *nor seek for Protection from Censures; but the truth is (and a free Confession shall Attone I hope in some measure for my presumption) that being de-*

firous to do all the Honour I could to the School I belong to, and all the right I could to the Argument I undertook, I knew no better way, then to produce your Names in your present Station, as so many Worthy Members of the one, and so many Living Examples of the other.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your unfeigned Servant,

Joseph Layton.

Rom. 12. 1. Latter part of the Verſe.

Which is your Reaſonable Service.

YOU have already had (worthy Friends and School-fellows) the advantages of a Learned and Liberal Education, ſet forth in Terms befitting ſuch an Education, and full of ſuch a Learning. Learning, the Refiner of Mens Manners, the Poliſher of their Underſtandings, the Builder of Cities, the Founder of Empires, the Counſellor of Kings, the Companion of Inſpired Prophets and Apoſtles. In ſhort, Learning, the Heathens Grace, the Chriſtians Glory and Aureola, the Ornament of the World, the Arcanum of Paradice. You have had alſo the Beauties and Advantages of your particular Education, ſet forth with all that Gratitude and Affection that becomes the Diſciples of ſo many worthy Teachers, and the Foſter-Children, the Alumni of ſo many Kings: After this, little more could have been added to the honour of your Solemnities, even this ſo fertile an Argument had been quite exhauſted, if

in our late Revolutions, the Miſchief and Malice of other Meetings had not ſet off the Innocence and Beauty of yours: And the Practices of Unruly and Unreaſonable Men had not furniſhed us with a freſh and new Topick of Praiſe and Thankſgiving to God the Father of all Mercies, who by the Providence of our Education admoniſht, that we have not ſo learned Chriſt; and by the Inſpiration of his Grace has diſpoſed us to offer up this truly Holy, Ingenuous, and Reaſonable Service. It is a joy to ſee the Members of this worthy Chriſtian Aſſembly crowd and preſs through the throng of buſineſs: And from all Quarters of Profeſſions and Employments, and from all diſtinctions of Degree and Quality haſten up to this Rendezvous of Love and Friendſhip; ſuch a March, and with ſo good a Will I conceive the Disbanded Atoms of our Bodies ſhall make at the day of Reſurrection, when they ſhall rally up, and reunite again.

And now we are here, It is a Pleaſure to conſider the Conduct of God's Providence over us; From what Beginnings we are thus grown up; To remember with what Staff we paſt our *Jordan*: And now, *Behold what a mighty Band we are*, Tho this, I ſay, be joyful, yet let me tell you, 'tis a greater Comfort to have made our Paſſage hither untainted, uninfected with Popiſh

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or Fanatick Pollutions: That ye have ſcap'd the Leaven both of the Scribes and Phariſees, the Men of meer Text and Tradition: And that ye have brought hither the ſame honeſt hearts, and the ſame Feſtival faces, the ſame Integrity and Alacrity as ever. And becauſe next to God's preventing Grace we owe this happineſs to the Principles we imbib'd in our firſt and younger years; Therefore it ſhall be our Task this day, among the reſt of our θρησκεια, to render Almighty God our moſt hearty and unfeigned thanks, who hath enabled us *To eſchew the Evil and chooſe the Good*; the God who hath preſerved us ſteady and upright, amidſt the many late Confuſions and Apoſtacies: and by affording us ſome little part of *Solomon's* Bleſſing, *A Wiſe and Underſtanding heart*, has continued us hitherto in one conſtant courſe of regular Piety, and unblemiſh'd Loyalty.

Brethren, in the Liſt and Catalogue of your Endowments, your Accompliſhments, could I have pitch't on any thing ſo conſiderable as this: Learning and Breeding gives you a vivacity of Spirit, it furniſhes you with Dexterity for Buſineſs, with Prudence for Counſel, with pertinent Examples for Practice, and an Uſeful Profitable Reputation to your Perſons. But above all, Learning enables you to ſearch into Myſteries, to underſtand the Nature, Order, and Connexion

of things to comprehend Divine Truths, *To be wise unto Salvation*, and even to seize upon *Heaven* it self, with the victorious *Violence* of a Reason that is Train'd and Tutor'd in the School, and Armed in the Church.

Even your old School-Authors, *Tully*, and some others, how little did they want to become Christians? How far did they go by the light of Reason improv'd by Education? You may reckon them in some measure with the Patriarchs, *That desired to see the things that ye see*; or with him in the Gospel, *That was not far from the Kingdom of Heaven.* At least this we may say, That the Learning of *Greece* and *Rome* disposed the World to receive Christianity; That *Plato* and *Aristotle* were the Gentiles *John* Baptists, to prepare Christ's way and *Make his paths streight*; and among ingenuous inquisitive Men that were aweary of the Reign of *Jupiter*, and tir'd with the Tales of *Elysium*, it was no difficult matter to introduce so reasonable a Service as that of our Religion. And for the Honour of your Profession (for such you shall give me leave to call it) you may observe, that tho God imployed not the Wise and the Learned to convince the World at first, but us'd illiterate Persons to make his Power in them more manifest; yet as the World came in He withdrew his Arm and his Miracles, and at last he entirely committed the defence

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of his Cauſe to Study and Learning, to Arts and Sciences, then when the Philoſophers ſucceeded the Fiſher-men, and Learned Apologies and Orations to *Verily, Verily I ſay unto you.*

Among theſe Worthies ye are to be Numbred, that not only believe but underſtand their Religion, and can defend it. And it is God's peculiar favour to commit this Talent to you, which, as I ſaid, is our this days buſineſs, to give him thanks for that he has enabled us to offer him this *Reaſonable Service.* In doing which,

1. I ſhall inſtance in ſeveral Particulars, wherein your Education has befriended you, towards the enabling you to this Duty of ſerving God reaſonably and acceptably.

2. To excite your Gratitude the more, I ſhall compare your Condition with that of moſt others, whom we may rank under Three Heads.

1. The Formal bred and born Chriſtian, that makes no uſe of his Reaſon.

2. The Papiſt, That enſlaves it, truſting to his implicit Faith.

3. The Enthuſiaſt, That deſpiſes and renounces it.

3. Shew that this particular Meeting is a Reaſonable Service, and that we are to thank him becauſe he has enabled us to be thankful.

That is to ſay,

1. A Learned Education by refining a Mans Parts, elevating his Mind, ennobling his Faculties, and filling them with rich and worthy Ideas, does thereby enable him to have Juſt and Honourable apprehenſion of God: And this is the firſt and moſt important Principle of Religion, for ſuch as we ſuppoſe God to be, ſuch a courſe ſhall we take to pleaſe him. Some have fancied God to be an unactive Being in the World, enjoying himſelf in an Eternal Reſt and Retiredneſs, accordingly they abandon themſelves to Luxury and Senſuality; for how ſhould they dread that Providence that cares for nothing? Or that *Omnipotence* that does *Nothing*? Others confine him to too narrow a Sphear, providing but for a little Flock and a ſmall Remnant, wronging all his other Attributes to exalt his Sovereignty: And they ſeek private and unaccountable ways to aſſure themſelves of an ungrounded unaccountable favour. The Papiſts, that they might give their People a Notion of God, dreſs him up in the ſimilitude of a Man; and though they pretend not to paint Eſſences, yet they expoſe him to every vulgar Eye, and every vulgar Conception, in ſuch reſemblances which he was only pleaſed for ſecret Reaſons, and in Myſtical ways to Communicate to his choſen Prophets. And they Tranſcribe *Ovid* and *Propertius* to find a ſtyle for the loves of Angels and

and Glorified Spirits above. And not a few fancying God to be adorned as they best like, seek after a strange and personal Union with him. And in this Scene of their Imaginations they pursue him with Effeminate Passions, with Longings and Languishments, with Extravagant Joys and sudden Despairs, as their sick and distemper'd Fancies lead them.

There are Gross and Carnal Conceptions changing the Glory of the Incorruptible God into the Similitude of a Corruptible Creature, *Rom.* 1. 3. But to make him vindicative and Sanguinary, and with a Turkish Tyranny to fling away Souls into Eternal Perdition is next to Blasphemy. But your Predecessor *Abraham* μετεωρολόγικος ὤν, being a Man addicted to Study and Contemplation, when he consider'd the Creation, God's Work, and consulted with his Reason, which is a Beam of God himself, He found, That to be God is to be most Holy, Wise, Just, Good, Merciful: In short, That which we can conceive to be most Perfect, that, and infinitely more so is God. He Judged of him by reasonable Collections, not fanciful Ideas: And such an advantage have ye, Brethren, who having your minds purged from all drossy and low thoughts, are enabled by the benefit of your Education to attain to this first and fundamental Principle of Eternal Life; Namely, *To konw Thee the Only True God,*

God, and ſo to offer him a *Worthy Reaſonable Service.*

2. Hereby we come to know the true Nature, Excellency and Perfection of Religion. For ſince God is ſuch, ſuch alſo muſt be the way to Honour and Worſhip him. And if in any of his Commands there be any doubtful Expreſſions, and variety of Interpretations, that is to be eſteemed moſt agreeable to God's Will, which is moſt conſonant to Reaſon. God Governs us as he has made us; ſo that being neither Engins nor Angels, we act not by Inſtinct nor Intuition, but by diſcourſe and rational Progreſſions. If you conſider the Articles, the Myſteries of our moſt Holy Faith, none but a conſidering Man will be induc'd to receive them; And for the practical Points of our Obedience, none but a Brute will reject them. There muſt be wiſe Conſideration and ſerious Pondering: The *Berœan* Generoſity, and a full Conviction of the Underſtanding to make a Man a Chriſtian; for Faith is not the Milk of the Nurſe, nor the Credulity of the Simple, nor a point of Honour among Sword-men; nor the Sence of the Houſe among Politicians, nor a blind Subjection to the Infallible Chair: But it is the deliberate Choice of a Prudent Rational Man, that without contending for rigorous Demonſtrations, and Scientifical Surefootings, is content to ſubmit to every degree

degree of Truth, and entertain every Beam of Light, is ready to comply when the motives to belief preponderate, tho the things themſelves be incomprehenſible.

But Oh the loſs, the miſery of thoſe whoſe Talent it is to hold the Plough; How ſhould they comprehend with all illuminated Saints, *Eph.* 3. 18. *What is the Breadth and Length, and Heigth and Depth*; and obſerve the Lines of the Great Myſtery of Godlineſs, from ſo many Points of ſo vaſt a Circumference beautifully centring in the *Meſſias*? How ſhould they with the Wiſemen follow his Star, or trace the Great Birth, the Promiſed Seed from its firſt quick'ning in *Eve*, through the long-liv'd Patriarchs, through the Sacrifices and Ceremonies of the Law, through all the Prophets down to the Midwifry of the Baptiſt, when in the fulneſs of time it ripned into the Stature of a Man in *Chriſt Jeſus*? What a Glorious Knowledge is this, to diſcourſe out of the Scriptures, and from them to be able to give a reaſon of our Faith: To Summon in the Antiquities of Nations, the Hiſtories of Times, the Rites and Religious Solemnities of Prieſts, the Fables of Poets, the Reſults of Philoſophers? In ſhort, to preſs the whole Creation to make bare every Shoulder for this Service of atteſting to the Truth of our Religion, and Illuſtrating the Glory of *Jeſus*. Theſe things, Brethren, ye are cal-

led to know, that is, ye have been put into the way to know them, your Fleece, like *Gideon's*, has been moiſt'ned with this Heavenly Dew, when ſo many others has been left dry. So that having your hearts filled with theſe Sacred Truths, and your whole Man Tranſported with Raptures of Love, Joy, and Admiration, ye will find freſh cauſe to bleſs God for the benefit of being able to offer him this *Reaſonable Service.*

3. It is a great help towards diſcerning the Spirits, that ſo we may better hold faſt the Truth. It is a difficult matter among the many Cries, *Lo here is Chriſt, and there is Chriſt*, to diſtinguiſh the Voice of God; ſo that 'tis neceſſary to our other Graces to add Knowledge, and to have our Sences exerciſed in Spiritual Matters. Is it likely and reaſonable that God ſhould entruſt one Man with a Spirit of Infallibility for the benefit of his Church, and yet no where declare ſo much? Or that it ſhould never be put in Practice, or that ſo Divine a gift ſhould be lodged in a vicious Man, and God ſhould liken his Vicegerent to the fallen Angels, who with Perfection of Knowledge abound in Wickedneſs? Or where is the Reaſon of fighting for Faith, and Rebelling for Religion? Our Saviour refuſed all force and violence, tho he could have call'd

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in more than twelve Legions to his Aſſiſtance. But the Saints may do more than the Angels, and Reform the Government even of Chriſt himſelf. We hear *The noiſe of the Whip, and the ratling of the Wheels, and the Prancing of the Horſes; The Horſeman lifteth up his bright Sword and his glittering Spear*, Nahum 3. 2, 3. Every part of Chriſtendom almoſt is a Stage of War, and how narrowly did we eſcape it? And their Pretence is written in their Banners, *For God and Religion.* But ye ſee this is all but Maſquery and Diſguiſe. And when we come to compare theſe practices, with ſuch Notions of God and Religion as are reaſonable and becoming them, then do we find the Mercy in theſe times of deceit and diſtraction, that God has endued us with a Spirit of Underſtanding, and refcued us from the common Errors and Deluſions of the Age.

4. It teaches us to give a due Value to every thing; and to give due Limits to every Action, and chooſe apt Seaſons. It moderates Zeal with Knowledge: It fortifies Innocence with Prudence: It Inſpires Meekneſs with a becoming Fortitude, and diſtinguiſhes Patience from Puſillanimity: It guides the hand of Charity, and by a wiſe obſervation of fitting Circumſtances makes the action Beautiful and Decorous. Certainly Religion deſerves our utmoſt care and skill to

recommend it dext'rouſly to the Affections of Men, St. *Paul* has Commanded us to adorn the Goſpel, and to take heed leſt our God be evil ſpoken of, and our moſt Holy Religion Blaſphemed through our means. And thoſe that ſtrain at a Gnat and ſwallow a Camel, That will rebuke a Servant for Recreating on the Lord's day, and entice him from his Calling to take up Arms againſt the Lords Anointed. Thoſe that are Imprudent and Inconſiderate, that are rude in their Rebukes, and ſcurrillous in their Language: That Reproach Kings to their faces, and thereby make Truth odious and offenſive, do a great diſſervice to their moſt Holy Cauſe, by their untutor'd, undiſciplin'd fierceneſs. But Education makes a Man ſoft and plyable, and like the Learned Apoſtle *to become all things to all Men* : It makes him watch all Opportunities, and wait at all the Avenues of the Soul to gain Entrance, to uſe honeſt Flatteries, and proper Inſinuations to do a Man good. Were there no other benefit, yet this were Conſiderable, that it takes away that brutiſh *Impetus* that makes a Man ruſh like a Horſe into the Battle: It allays his heat, compoſes his Mind and Countenance, modulates his very Tone and Action, and gives a Charm to every thing he does, beſides the Reputation it gives to his Diſcourſes.

Repu-

Reputation, I ſay, that important bubble, which tho it be but noiſe and vapour, yet is the moſt powerful thing in Nature, without which Goodneſs is but a weak helpleſs thing: Neither is there any fame ſo conſiderable as that of a Learned Knowing Man; all his Words are Oracles, and his Actions Preſidents and rul'd Caſes: Nature affix'd a ſhame to Ignorance, and gives an Authority and Reverence to Learning, therefore no impertinent Queſtion, *Have the Phariſees believ'd in him?* And St. *Paul*, when he would beſpeak the favour and attention of the *Athenians*, he made uſe of his acquaintance with their own Poets and Philoſophers. This is another addition to the advantages ye receive by Education.

5. It gives a Man courage and boldneſs in the day of Tryal, and at all times a love and hearty concern for his Religion, becauſe he underſtands it. You have a late Example of this, they were the wiſe and well diſciplin'd Chriſtians that ſtem'd the Tyde, and ſtopt the Torrent. How little does the Scoff of the Atheiſt, or the Cavil of the Heretick, or the Sword of Perſecution, or the Example of the Multitude work upon a mind that is ſetled and aſſured in it ſelf? I know, I am perſwaded, I am aſſured, I have confidence, ſaid the Apoſtles. And in the Virtue of this Strength they could endure all things

not

not only with Patience but Joy, not only with Meekneſs but Magnanimity. So little does the two great Vices of the Age, the Droll of the Atheiſt, and the Rage of the Religioniſt ſignifie to a Soul that is Armed with Syllogiſm and the Spirit; and at all times a concern for it. It is true the knowing Soul is naturally calm and quiet; and when after a few previous vibrations it is once ſetled on its Baſis, there it reſts, enjoying its ſelf in its own Circle of light and temperate heat: While conceited Ignorants are noiſy and reſtleſs: But when once they become ſenſible of the neceſſity of their aſſiſtance, then they afford a hearty, generous, and laſting Service: It is too true, That the Affection of many is grown Cold; and by ſhifting off their Duties upon God's and the Magiſtrates Care for the Church, Evil Men had like to have ſwallowed us up Quick; and the noiſe of Arms would have drown'd the voice of Thankſgiving, and Triumphant Fanaticiſm would have taken away not only the Memorials of our Education, but the Places themſelves too. But among the few that have retain'd their firſt Love I may well reckon the Sons of Learning, the Heirs of Kings, Men obliged and inſtructed by their breeding to undertake this labour of Love. None can ſo well underſtand the value of our preſent enjoyments, nor foreſee the miſery of a change, nor more

timely

timely prevent, nor more effectually redreſs; ſo that ye have a peculiar Call to this Honourable Work of preſerving Religion, and ſupporting the Crown, and ſo making as it were ſome returns to the Piety and Bounty of our *Royal Founder*.

6. Becauſe 'tis a *Reaſonable Service*, therefore ſuch a Man has a real and ſolid Satisfaction when he comes to take a Review of his Method. Certainly the greateſt happineſs of this life is a peaceful temperate Alacrity and Tranquility of mind; but this is gain'd only by Reaſon, and is the reſult of Prudence and Conduct. Fools that do good by Chance, or put on by Example, or a fit of good humour, are carried into Extravagant Tranſports, their Joys are indecent and freakiſh, Happineſs ſits not handſomly on them, becauſe they laid no Foundation, nor went wiſely to work. It is a delightful thing to ſtand on the Shore, after a long and dangerous Voyage, and ſee others ſtruggling with the contrarieties of the Wind and Waves. And it is a noble Applauſe that the Pilot gives himſelf: And it fattens his Soul to conſider the ſucceſs of his skill: And in his mind he repeats all the paſſages, what Rocks and what Sands he eſcap'd, where he bore up againſt the Storm, and where he ſided and complyed a little: And upon the whole to prove and demonſtrate

his

his Course by the Rules of his Art. Such is the satisfaction of a wise man. What the comforts be that God bestows by extraordinary Irradiations upon some Great and Eminent Persons, is a bold curiosity to enquire; but all the ordinary Confidences which the Spirit of God creates in the Elect are built upon Duty and conditional Agreements: *Hereby we know we are Translated from Death to Life, if we love the Brethren*, 1 John 3. 14. And many the like Scriptures are but Rational Inferences from supposed Premisses: And when departing Saints cast the last Eye upon themselves, their securest Anchor, next to the All-sufficient Merits of Christ, is, I say, ordinarily but the Conclusion of a Syllogism, whereof God makes the Major: And every Man by the Assistance of his Reason, and Examination of his Conscience is to add the Minor. Such a joyful Prospect I presume shall ye one day have, when after the Toil and Troubles of a busie Life ye shall seek Privacy, and be glad to retire into the Simplicity of the years ye this day Commemorate: For I reckon we must once more go to School, to Con over this dull Lesson of the World again, where Experience will be your Master, and Repentance your Discipline: It shall be a joy then, I say, upon rational grounds to conclude, *I have run my Race, I have finished my Course, henceforth a Crown of Life is laid up for me.*

Lastly,

Laſtly, and not the leaſt, this Education, this Ability, this Knowledge is beſt to teach us our own Ignorance, and conſequently Humility, Meekneſs and Condeſcention to others. He that knows the intricacies of Things, the variety of Apprehenſions, the different ſizes of Underſtandings: The Power of Prejudice, and Paſſion, muſt needs have compaſſionate thoughts for the generality of Men; and can with equal affection maintain Reaſon, and pity Ignorance. In Sum, Among all your Gifts and Graces, there is none ſo Amiable, ſo Honourable, ſo becoming a Scholar, as Humility, and Modeſty, and Mercy: Inſomuch that though you could ſpeak *With all Tongues, and work Miracles, yet without this Charity they were nothing worth*: So that if we bethink our ſelves well, we ſhall find this one of the moſt *Reaſonable Services* of all.

Theſe are ſome few of the many advantages of your Education, as it qualifies to ſerve God Reaſonably, and with Underſtanding; than which, next to his Sanctifying Grace, he has not beſtowed a nobler Talent upon the Sons of Men, and which therefore deſerves our moſt ſerious Conſideration, and our moſt ſincere acknowledgments. To illuſtrate this a little more, and ſettle it upon your affections, it will not be amiſs briefly from theſe Regions of Light to look down and behold the Children of Darkneſs,

grovling and wandering in the Mazes of Error, whom I reduced to three ranks; in our Second Part,

1. Such as make no uſe, Formal, Cuſtomary Chriſtians.

2. Such as Enſlave it by an implicit Faith.

3. Such as renounce and deſpiſe it, under Pretence of the Spirit.

1. Formal, The bred and born Chriſtian, he that ſucks in his Religion with his Country Air, and holds his Creed by the courteſie of *England*; that diſtinguiſhes Chriſtianity from *Mahometaniſm* by Croſſes and Half-Moons; and the Reformation from Popery by Beads and Bibles. In ſhort, He that is a Proſelyte to Cuſtom, and the Laws, a Diſciple of *Leviathan* rather than Chriſt. And it is a ſad truth: How few are able to render a reaſon of their Faith, and yet what a noiſe and a buſtle do they make for the Cauſe, and the True Proteſtant Religion? to whoſe Support they Contribute no more, than the Antick Faces do to the ſtrengthning of a Church: 'Tis true, 'tis a mercy to be born within the Pale of the Church, to open our Eyes in the Light of the Goſpel, and ſo 'tis to be born in a Temperate Clime. I make no doubt but God accepts the ſincerity of the Plough-man as well as the reaſon of the Philoſopher: That he will favour his own Gift, and receive thoſe to Glory whom he has

has predeſtin'd to Grace. Altho then *Theſe little Ones have their Angels*, and a Title to the Kingdom of Heaven, yet in this blind Felicity they are apt to ſtumble, and when Perſecution comes, to draw back: It is little more then the Homage which Birds and Beaſts pay; It is ſeeing by the benefit of Clay and Spittle; a *Sacrifice without Salt*. Whereas the Excellency of Religion conſiſts in a free and rational complyance with God's Commands, to underſtand the Excellency of them, and this is it that fixed *David's* heart, that preſerved *Lot* amidſt a crooked and perverſe Generation: And made St. *Paul* ſo confident, That nothing of any Nature *ſhould be able to ſeparate them from the Love of Jeſus*.

2. From hence turn your Eye to the Men of implicit Faith, and you ſhall ſee them creeping before Images, adoring of Wafers, paying Penſions for Purgatory, and Traffiquing for the price of Sins. In the midſt of all this Pageantry, and this Nonſenſe, Their comfort is, they believe as the Church believes. But God calls upon us to employ our Talent, to Exerciſe our ſelves in theſe things, to *Build up our ſelves in our moſt holy Faith*, and to *Stand faſt in the Liberty wherewith Chriſt has made us Free*. There can be no Articles *de Novo* impos'd upon the Church, becauſe the Church ſignifies a Number of Men already agreed upon common Terms:

And to impose New, is to alter the Primitive Constitution of the Church: But this device serves the ends of both Parties: And the Juggle is, That what the People part with of their Understanding, and the Use of their Reason, is made up to them in Allowances and Indulgences for sin, in easie Absolutions and cheap Penances. 'Tis a powerful Temptation to be freed from the trouble of Searching, Discussing, Examining: and it is a strong support of the Papal Tyranny. But where has God allowed this shifting and shuffling of Duties from one to another? How is it possible for one Man to understand and believe for another? But God accepts not the Sacrifice of Fools, nor can any Man *Redeem his Brothers Life*. And at the last day, whatever aggravations there may be for our Pride and our Sloth in this Case, yet there will be no Commutations of Punishments, no engagements for one anothers Souls will there be accepted. But every Man shall suffer in his own person according as *He has done in the Body*.

Lastly, Behold the Enthusiast, that is above Reason, and the Carnality of Discourse; and you shall find him to be given over to folly and madness, to giddy Doctrines, and destructive dangerous Impulses. If he commits a murther 'tis with the Sword of the Spirit, and if he throws down Churches 'tis with the Breath of the Spirit::

ric: In the Tranſactions with Mankind God declared not only his Attributes but his Nature, ſubſiſting in a Trinity of Perſons, and as ſuch he will be worſhipped: But is it reaſonable that the manifeſtation of the Spirit ſhould ſwallow up the work of the Creation, and by being Chriſtians we ſhould ceaſe to be Men. If the Scriptures which were given by Inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt be not perfect, all Mankind is at a loſs, in a Maze ſtill, and the Apoſtles did not as they ſaid, Declare the whole Truth of God; and it would diſparage the Divine Providence, and affront the Spirit of God, which is a Spirit of Wiſdom, and Knowledge, of Order and Regular Diſpenſations.

And this, in brief, may be ſufficient to let you ſee the folly and miſchief of all other Methods and Inſtitutions, ſave thoſe that Miniſter to a Reaſonable Service: Which brings me to the third and laſt Particular, *The Reaſonableneſs of this preſent Service*; concerning which ſo much has been already ſaid by my Predeceſſors, that I may be allowed to be the ſhorter.

1. Nothing is ſo Reaſonable, ſo Spiritual and acceptable to God as theſe Euchariſtical Oblations: As for other Services by way of Petition or Deprecation, they are peculiar to this Life only, and ſo of a lower Allay, and are in ſome ſort common to Beaſts, for even they lift up their

their Eyes to God ; and the whole Creation groaneth when it is in pain or want. Only Intellectual Beings can return Thanks, and Converse with God by Reciprocal interconrses. It argues a deep sence of favours received, and a thorough understanding of their worth, and a Soul not only fram'd and moulded by the Holy Spirit to this Noble Work, but Crown'd with Joy and Raptures, and the unspeakable satisfactions of the Holy Ghost.

It was God's Command, *Deut.* 16, *That the Males should appear Three times a year before him*; and that not empty, but bringing their returns of Gratitude with them. Among Christians this is our λογικὴ θυσία, and as at the Primitive Eucharists they us'd to offer Thanks for all the Patriarchs and Prophets, the Apostles, and Martyrs, and Confessors, the Founders and Benefactors of the Church ; so we do for all our particular Favours and Blessings : And as in the Law every one was to give as he was able, so we are to present him with our Souls and Bodies, and the several proportions of Goodness, Wisdom, Wealth, Honour we have attain'd to. If the Souls of departed Saints have any Sence of what is done here below, no doubt but all your glorious friends above, will rejoyce and applaud themselves in their work, and reap the abundant fruits of their labour, in seeing their Pupils, their

Charge

Charge advanc't by the benefit of their Education, to a work ſo like their own: For I conceive Love and Learning to be the employment of Angels and glorified Spirits too as well as yours, who after they have taken out their Leſſon from the face of God, the Beatifick Viſion, betake themſelves to Laud and Thanſgivings, to Feaſts, ſuch as Angels make, and mutual Embracements. If not, if they be laid up in their ſecret Repoſitories till the day of Judgment, God ſhall be a ſufficient reward and recompence, who will fill your hearts with more grace, and your minds with more light, and your Families with more Bleſſings; and your Names both Living and Dead with the Perfume of good and faithful Servants.

2. It is an act highly Reaſonable and infinitely Commendable, to declare your Gratitude in this publick Aſſembly to thoſe worthy Perſons, the Inſtructors of your Youth, your Guides, your Teachers, your Angel-Guardians, here below, when you were *little Ones*. Among the other degeneracies of the Age, there is this common one of Ingratitude to Teachers: And the firſt act our Gallants do when they write Man is this piece of Inhumanity of deſpiſing and villifying their Education: So that this Aſſembly may in ſome meaſure Atone for many others, and your *Charity cover a multitude of faults*. It is much that the regular Method, and the Indefatigable

Induſtry,

Industry, and the rich Stock of Learning in our Schools and Academies ſhould ſo ſoon be outſtript by a Clubb and a Coffee-houſe; but Vice abhors all Learning, and Sloth invents *Compendiums*; and a great deal of Conceit, and a little of Mr. *Hobbs* ſets up a raw young Man for a Philoſopher, and a Stateſman, and a Man of the World. I ſhall not ſtand to reckon up the Honours that Emperors and Cities in all Nations have given to the Inſtructors of their Youth: Of how great importance it is to Seaſon wiſely the growing hopes, the *Futurus Populus* of a Nation; it is ſufficient that our Bleſſed Saviour, in whom the *Fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt bodily*, and in *Whom all the Treaſures of Wiſdom were laid up*, yet in his Minority he went among the Doctors, if I may ſo ſay, to School; and he honour'd and Authoris'd their Profeſſion by his Converſing with them: I will in your Names therefore return to as many as are living and capable of receiving them, your unfeigned and acknowledgments thanks, and pray that God would return an 100 fold into their Boſom, all that Love and Care they have beſtowed upon us.

3. This Publick Legal Aſſembly is a ſuitable return for the mercy of our Publick Legal Education. A Bleſſing no ways to be pretermitted ſince it brings ſo many conſiderable Advantages with it. It is a common Queſtion, Which is

the

the readier way to Learning, Private or Publick Teaching: For the former there is urg'd, A conſtant Care and Attendance upon one or a few Perſons, a particular and exact obſervation of their Natural Inclinations, Intellectual Abilities, and acquired Improvements, and ſo a juſt apportioning his Task to his Capacity. On the other ſide, There is the light of Example, and the heat of Emulation, and the joy of Society, and a vivacity of Spirit thence reſulting, neceſſary to all the Parts and Duties of a Scholar, and a very probable ſecurity of Succeſs; and it is better to know how to ſecure Harveſt, then how to haſten Fruits. But if the Queſtion be, Which is the beſt way to make him an uſeful honeſt ſound Scholar? For a few Criticiſms and Speculations, or to teach the *Greek* Grammer a year before others, hold no Compariſon with Concord and Unity; here without doubt the Advantage lyes on the Publick ſide: For here are no unſound Documents, no private poiſonous Intermixtures, no preparatory Doſes for Schiſm and Faction: but all things are Adminiſtred according to the ſetled Diſpenſatory of Laws and Statutes: And the *Domus Doctrinæ* joyns to the Synagogue, and Men of Fame and Integrity teach in *Solomon*'s Porch, in the view and obſervation of the whole World. Experience teaches us the miſchief of Foreign Seminaries and unli-

cens'd Academies at home: And as from the remote Corners of *Scythia* from Dens and Marshes, the barbarous *Goths* and *Vandals* brake in upon and destroyed fair and Learned *Italy*, so from these private Holes it was that our Locusts overspread the face of our Church and Nation. But that which I would recommend to your observation, and so I have done, is,

That a private, secret Education does not only expose a Youth to the Malignant Influences of evil Men, but Secrecy and Solitarinesse it self does naturally poison the Candour and Ingenuity of his Nature. For as soon as they are seated in their places, they look upon themselves in a state of Opposition and Hostility with other Schools; and so they catch at Paradoxes and Novelties, and study Cavils and Quirks and Evasions, and hunt after Slanders and Stories to advance their Party, and illustrate the obscurity of their Education. It is almost necessary they should grow either Proud or Splenatick, or Sad and Gloomy, or Sullen and Morose, or Envious and Wrathful; and with these accomplishments they come into the World, and are exactly qualified at least to become the Author's in Characters, and your *Julians*, and your *Growth of Popery*, and all that Spawn of Pamphlets that have of late disturb'd and infected the Nation.

Solitude

Solitude is a thing ſo dangerous, that our Lord himſelf, ſpeaking of him as a Man, would not venture into the Wilderneſs, but under the Guidance and Protection of the Spirit. In Sum, The ſeveral Forms of Angels in gladſom Troops and Lightſom Places, celebrate the Divine Praiſe, and ſtudy the good of Mankind: Only Furies in dark and deſolate Caves, and Witches in Melancholly midnight Meetings, and Traytors at Secret Conſults and Cabals Complot their Miſchiefs and Deſtruction.

I have now done with your Patience; And it remains only to pray,

That God would Inſpire us with a due Sence and Acknowledgments of the many Bleſſings he has beſtowed upon us. That we may live like the Children of Light and Knowledge, and ſhew our Gratitude by our right uſe and improvement of them, to his Honour and Glory.

That God would ſhowre down his Bleſſings upon the Head of our moſt Gracious Sovereign Lord King *Charles*, the Heir of our Royal Founder's Piety and Patrimony, and the Protector of our Fortunes, and the Encourager, and (if I may ſay it with Reverence) in ſome ſort the Companion of our preſent Meetings; and that he would Accumulate upon his Head all the Bleſſings due to the conſtant Defender of the Faith, and the Munificent Nurſing Father of the Church: And

that

that the Prayers of all the Poor, and the Orphan, and all that have received Life and Warmth, or any benefit from the Charity of this Royal Foundation, may descend upon Himself and his Posterity to all Generations.

Lastly, May Love, and Unity, and all the good natur'd Vertues dwell amongst your selves, and preserve you ever, till you meet together again, and Feast in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Now, to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Three Persons, and One God, be all Honour, Power, Praise and Glory attributed for these and all his other Mercies, now and for ever more. *Amen.*

FINIS.

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